UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

Our Flowering American Drama - - - - - - *W. Waldemar W. Argow, II.*

But Who Are the Isolationists? - *Miriam Ziony*

"I Saw No Criminals" - *Benjamin Friedman*

The Study Table

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

War Resister Strategy

It was an eager group which met under the lovely flowering dogwood of Camp Northover, Bound Brook, New Jersey, and debated pacifist strategy, 1938, in the Ninth Annual Conference of the War Resisters League.

> Amid wars and rumors of wars there are those who remain staunch in their pacifism as the only way to social realism and personal integrity. This Annual Conference serves to unite those who are committed to militant pacifism in a fellowship that gives strength and inspiration. It also helps to clarify issues relating to alternative lines of action open to pacifists both during periods of crisis when war is threatened and after war is declared.

So read the initial call! And for all the sinister threat to our peace, challenging us to ever fresh labors in such daylight as remains, the keynote of our meetings was one of hope for the world which will at last be surely builded of such efforts, and of gratitude for the heroic witnessing against war which has gone on, down the long march of history to the band which is gathered together today from almost three-score countries, in the War Resisters International.

Exploring the universe with one's feet on the ground might be a nutshell description of the conference. It was tremendously interesting. And we joyfully extend an invitation to your readers who are not yet with us in the W. R. L. (Address 2 Stone St., New York) to join us, so that we may all go forward in energizing comradeship on the basis of this personal, thorough-going refusal to support any war for any cause.

Dr. Jessie Wallace Hughan, founder and secretary of the League, opened the conference, introducing Dr. Paul Limbert, of Columbia University, who led off, as befitted a professor of philosophy, with an arresting analysis of Mr. Aldous Huxley's brilliant latest book, *Ends and Means.* We received with pleasure the Huxley contention that "the more violence, the less revolution," and the thorough-going disarmament advocates from the Women's Peace Union rejoiced when Dr. Limbert reminded us how effectively Huxley pricks the bubble of the international police. Dr. John Howland Lathrop gave the second address with a vivid first-hand description of the starving Danube Valley, pleading for the abolition of tariff walls, and frequent treaty revision.

But it was of course the conscientious objector who dominated the conference, and when, after a day of excellent historical and theoretical addresses about him, participated in by A. J. Muste, Harold E. Fey, Winston Dancis and others, the conscientious objector himself took the platform in the person of Evan W. Thomas, we rose to our feet, throats tight, in silent

(*Continued on page* 160)

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CXXI MONDAY, JULY 18, 1938 No. 10

A PRAYER FOR THE IDLE

O God, we remember with pain and pity the thousands of our brothers and sisters who seek honest work and seek in vain. For though the unsatisfied wants of men are many, and though our land is wide and calls for labor, yet these thy sons and daughters have no place to labor, and are turned away in humiliation and despair when they seek it. O righteous God, we acknowledge our common guilt for the disorder of our industry which thrusts even willing workers into the degradation of idleness and want, and teaches some to love the sloth which once they feared and hated.

We remember also with sorrow and compassion the idle rich, who have vigor of body and mind and yet produce no useful thing. Forgive them for loading the burden of their support on the bent shoulders of the working world. Forgive them for wasting in refined excess what would feed the pale children of the poor. Forgive them for setting their poisoned splendor before the thirsty hearts of the young, luring them to theft or shame by the lust of eye and flesh. Forgive them for taking pride in their workless lives and despising those by whose toil they live. Forgive them for appeasing their better self by pretended duties and injurious charities. We beseech thee to awaken them by the new voice of thy Spirit that they may look up into the stern eyes of thy Christ and may be smitten with the blessed pangs of repentance. Grant them strength of soul to rise from their silken shame and to give their brothers a just return of labor for the bread they eat.

And to our whole nation do thou grant wisdom to create a world in which none shall be forced to idle in want, and none shall be able to idle in luxury, but in which all shall know the health of wholesome work and the sweetness of well-earned rest. Amen.

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH, in
Prayers of the Social Awakening.

PEACE AT ANY PRICE

In England, at this critical hour, is a great mass of extreme pacifist opinion—hundreds of thousands of men and women, stirred by Lord Ponsonby, and the late "Dick" Sheppard, and Dr. Frederick Norwood, who are resolved not to support another war. These persons, if they know their own minds, believe in peace at any price. But do they realize what peace at any price means? If not, they would seem to be getting something of a lesson at this moment from their Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain, who, for reasons realistic rather than idealistic, is apparently determined not to go to war, nor even to threaten war. One British ship after another is being sunk by Franco's bombs, with heavy loss of life—and the Prime Minister declares that he does not propose to do anything about it, for this might mean war, and he is *not going to war* for this or any other such reason. The amazing thing about this policy is that it should come from such a source. What wonder that Chamberlain is being accused of cowardice and every other ignoble quality characteristic of the man who accepts insult and injury without resistance! But this is just the policy, none the less, that would be followed by the pacifist if he were in office—just exactly the policy laid down by Jesus when he said that if a man "smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." And the pacifist would deny that this is cowardice, rather insisting that it is wisdom and high idealism. Wisdom in the sense that, if England goes to war over this Spanish situation, she will not be protecting English ships, but rather exposing every English vessel on the seas to summary destruction! Idealism in the sense that, in refraining from war on this issue, England is refusing to plunge millions of English men, women, and children, to say nothing of Italians and Spaniards—innocent, all of them, of offense—into the horrors of modern war just because privately owned English ships insist upon entering a war-area in search of private profit! There are two points of view on this problem. The militaristic and nationalistic point of view, which is interested in matters of "honor and the sword," and of course sees in Chamberlain a craven coward! And then there is the humanitarian, or idealistic, point of view, which repudiates violence, and insists that in patience, reason, and good will there is always a better way of settling disputes. Curious that a hard-shelled Tory should now be teaching the world the logic of the pacifist position!

CONSCRIPTION FOR LABOR IN PEACE TIME

Hitler has taken a momentous step in his decree, enforcible this month, conscripting all Germans, without exception, for labor at "nationally urgent tasks" in the Reich. Every man and woman in the country able to work is now obligated under law to serve for a limited period in any job that may be assigned him (or her) by the State. What is to be said about this decree? We would say two things! First, if conscription is right and proper in wartime, why not the same in peacetime? If a government may seize and force citizens to fight and die for the State, why

may it not likewise seize and force citizens to labor for the State? President Roosevelt has repeatedly described the New Deal as a war against two enemies —unemployment and economic ruin. If this description is accurate, why is not conscription as much justified in such a war at home as in any war abroad against enemies in arms? This is evidently Hitler's logic, and we see no answer to it. If we object, it is because we object to the whole conscription idea. Which brings us to the second thing we want to say about this Nazi decree! This is that conscription, either in peace or war, is abominable. It is the essence of tyranny. The idea that a government has the right to enter the households of citizens, and seize their persons, and carry them away to be enlisted and held in working or fighting armies by force, is an outrage not only upon democracy but also upon all that comports with human dignity and honor. Conscription is slavery. We see this clearly enough when Hitler uses conscription to force citizens to work. Why do we not see it as clearly when our own government uses conscription to force citizens to fight? Men will never be free until they stand up in their boots and serve notice on their governments that they will not be conscripted for anything, but will do whatever they do voluntarily for their own love and service of their country. Such declaration would end Naziism—and would also, incidentally, end war!

PRESIDENT TO MAYOR

"Hello, hello! Is this Mayor Hague, of Jersey City? Good morning, Mr. Mayor! Did you hear or read the President's radio talk on Friday, the 24th last? You *did!* That's good! Then I hope you noticed what the President said about constitutional democracy and free speech—this passage, Mr. Mayor:

> There can be no constitutional democracy in any community which denies to the individual his freedom to speak and worship as he wishes. The American people will not be deceived by any one who attempts to suppress individual liberty under the pretense of patriotism.

Whose head does that cap fit, Mr. Mayor? This country of ours, you know—or ought to know—is a 'constitutional democracy.' That means the President was talking about *us*. And he said that our constitutional democracy applied to every community in this country, and was denied if any community—Jersey City, for example!—denied freedom of speech and worship to the individual. That's what you've been doing, isn't it, Mr. Mayor—denying to individuals the right to speak freely in your community? And notice that the President referred to 'the individual'—which means *any* individual, no matter what his opinions or ideas —a C. I. O., perhaps, or a Socialist, or even a Communist. And the President went on to mention other things, too—'the pretense of patriotism,' for example. That's been your 'pretense' in all this recent excitement, hasn't it, Mr. Mayor? You're a great patriot, you are. You're all for the flag, and for protecting America from the 'reds,' and for sending the 'reds' back where they came from—Moscow, or perhaps New York. Well, the American people, said the President, are not going to be 'deceived by any one who attempts to suppress individual liberty under the pretense of patriotism.' Does that cap fit you, Mr. Mayor? It fits snugger than a veteran's cap to the cranium of an American Legionnaire. It fits you so perfectly that we know full well that the President took the measure of your head before he spoke, and thus made a fit so exact that no one could mistake it—not even *you!* Yes, Mr. Mayor, it was *you* the President was talking about that night. And all honor to him for seeing his responsibility for you as Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of his Party, and repudiating you! You're done for, Mr. Mayor. The President has spoken not only for himself, but for the Democratic Party and for America. Good-bye!"

MIRACULOUS AMERICA

On Memorial Day a crowd of more than 150,000 persons jammed the Indianapolis race course, to witness the annual automobile races. Well over a million dollars were spent on this event. On the same day, in New York, a crowd of over 80,000 assembled in the Yankee Stadium, to watch a regularly scheduled holiday baseball game. On Thursday, June 22nd last, a crowd of 80,000 men and women gathered from all parts of the country in New York to witness the world-championship prize fight between Joe Louis and Max Schmeling. For a contest which lasted just two minutes and four seconds, a "gate" of a million dollars was paid in, and it was estimated that another three million dollars were taken in by railroads, hotels, restaurants, and bars. On the same day, in Cleveland, a mob of 67,459 persons packed the Municipal Stadium —the second largest crowd since the Stadium was opened—to see a "double-header" baseball game between the Cleveland "Indians" and the New York "Yankees." On the following Friday, June 24th, unnumbered thousands of men and women rushed to New London to watch the Yale-Harvard boat race from automobiles, railroad trains, and hundreds of private yachts which crowded the river throughout the full length of the four-mile course. On the other side of the continent, in Los Angeles, during this same month of June, 30,000 Shriners held their annual convention, and in a succession of days of mad hilarity and celebration, flung away well over a million and a half dollars. On the Fourth of July, more than 2,700,000 persons crowded the beaches in and about New York, and made prosperously merry. And, as always, horse races gather enormous crowds which bet

huge sums of money, dog races in proportion attract their multitudes, and "Bingo" goes on raking in the jingling shekels for churches, synagogues, fairs, and bazaars. *And we are in the midst of the second great depression, with business at a standstill, over* 12,000,000 *persons unemployed, and as many millions on relief or W. P. A.!* What's the answer?

MODERATOR BABSON

It must be a relief to our Congregational brethren to have Roger W. Babson no longer the Moderator of their churches. Mr. Babson's retirement at the biennial conference at Beloit, Wisconsin, was the occasion of no outward celebration, but it certainly prompted festive rejoicings in many an official heart. Yet, as we look back upon these two years of storm and stress which made up Mr. Babson's consulship, we find ourselves wondering what it was all about. For one thing, of course, the Moderator took his position seriously—an unheard of thing! Instead of relapsing into the attitude of a mere figurehead, Moderator Babson took an active interest in the churches, made suggestions, offered criticisms—in other words, was a leader. That such activity was disturbing to the official hierarchy, the headquarters secretaries and the rest, is quite in the ecclesiastical tradition. Then, too, Mr. Babson was outraged by the salary rate of the parish ministers, especially as compared with the high officials of the denomination, and spoke right out in meetin' about this scandal. That agitation of such a subject—especially among the underpaid clergy—is heresy, goes without saying. Again, the Moderator, himself a businessman of great distinction and success, became persuaded that Congregational headquarters was "hipped" on the subject of business efficiency, and was quite losing sight of religious zeal. The great days of Christianity, he pointed out, were days when spiritual enthusiasm was loose in the world, and modern business methods were unknown. Less concern for efficiency according to the standards of this commercial age and more interest in stirring up a genuine religious revival were what the churches needed. Lastly, and most unpardonably, Moderator Babson insisted upon telling the truth about the condition of the churches today. Himself an expert statistician, he ripped to pieces the elaborate church census statistics showing a large increase annually of church members, Sunday school pupils, etc., and himself showed the facts —that the churches are everywhere dying. He let the cat out of the bag, in other words. What wonder that headquarters rose up against him! But now his term is done, and he is gone. Congregationalism can subside once more into innocuous desuetude. Religion, thank you, wants to be undisturbed. It asks a quiet life—and will get a quiet death!

THE WORLD COUNCIL AND THE UNITARIANS

Rev. Augustus P. Reccord, minister of the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Detroit, has a most interesting letter in the June 29th issue of the *Christian Century*. Commenting on the recent creation of the World Council of Churches at the provisional conference at Utrecht, Dr. Reccord calls attention to the fact that this World Council is announced as a "fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior," and that such announcement of course excludes from the organization "all Unitarians and Universalists, the majority of the Congregationalists and the liberal wings of many other Protestant denominations." A movement for church unity, in other words, is vitiated at the start by shutting out certain Christian groups which historically and spiritually have valid claim to recognition. There is an answer of course to this complaint—the same answer made years ago on the occasion of the organization of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America—the answer, namely, that, in a sadly divided religious world, church unity must begin somewhere, and the natural place is the place where stand the great historic communions of Christendom which still believe in the deity of Christ as the central element of Christian faith. But this answer only serves to reveal what is little mentioned these days, and that is that Christianity is as supernaturalist, i. e., as superstitious, as ever, and consequently seeks to rear the single church of Christ on a dogmatic foundation, rather than on that ethical or spiritual foundation which Jesus himself would alone recognize. In all the years since the founding of the Federal Council, in other words, the great body of historic Christendom has not moved forward an inch! Naturalistic religion is as unknown as though its development were not the most important religious phenomenon of the last quarter of a century. The duty of the liberals in this situation is manifest—to welcome any endeavor to bring Christians together, while themselves reaffirming with new and greater emphasis that humanistic and idealistic basis of religion which can alone serve as "the church's one foundation."

A GREAT NEGRO

James Weldon Johnson, dead in a tragic accident on June 26th last, stood in the great succession of Negro leaders in this country. Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, William E. Burghardt Du Bois, and James Weldon Johnson—this seems to us to be the historic ranking to date. Of Mr. Johnson it is difficult to say in which of many fields of high achievement and noble service he excelled. Like his distinguished brother, Rosamond, he was instinctively and

creatively the artist. In collaboration with Bob Cole, he wrote songs which have become a part of the folk-music of the American people. His poetry, notably the collection entitled *God's Trombones,* while rooted in the genius of his own people, has a distinction which is universal and thus a genuine and perhaps permanent place in our native literature. A lawyer and diplomat (consul in Venezuela, and later in Nicaragua), Mr. Johnson brought to the secretaryship of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People a training and experience which gave his service in this important office (1916-1930) a quality of leadership which was central in the transformation of Negro thought and life in this country during the last quarter of a century. As a teacher and educator, he was one of the great Negro influences of his time. His books, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, Black Manhattan,* and especially the story of his own adventurous and varied life, *Along This Way,* are notable. To those privileged to know Mr. Johnson, however, either as friend or associate, the man himself was far more notable, and now memorable, than the teacher, or poet, or executive. A gentleman of the highest order of character and culture, he represented a combination of gentleness and power, sweetness and strength, inward spiritual grace and outward practical action, which was like a chord of music, or a perfect poetic cadence. As he grew older, he ripened in wisdom and insight, but remained still youthful in his quick feeling of indignation over wrong and instant courage of word and deed. Moving easily and happily among his white friends, he maintained closest touch and sympathy with the masses of his black brethren struggling painfully but ever happily for justice and freedom. James Weldon Johnson was a great and a good man. Alas, the tragedy that ended so cruelly his blessed days on earth!

Our Flowering American Drama

W. WALDEMAR W. ARGOW, II

After two hundred years of abortive effort, the theatre in this country is today, for the first time, fulfilling a considerable measure of its thwarted destiny; and finds itself well along in a current great efflorescence of the American drama. Not a renaissance since it has no antecedent, this new flowering phenomenon is by all odds the most significant influence that has yet shaped our native stage. The American theatre is, at long last, coming into its own with a brilliance, a purposefulness and a rapidly developing maturity that are carrying it to the same high plane as that tenanted by the English and Russian drama.

This element of maturity is the key to the situation. Actually, the flowering period began twenty-five years ago when a few hardy interpreters, sensing what was in process of rapid gestation, predicted a brilliant and enduring future. It has remained for two decades, however, to determine whether the resultant plant was to be a mere sporadic weed or a lasting and beautiful flower. We have not yet attained full bloom. There is still another stage to be achieved in the process. But we are well on the way.

To appreciate fully the dramatic import of this past quarter-century, you will have to realize just how awful our native drama was on up past the ornate end of the 1890's. In the first hundred years of the ascendant republic, our theatre, like all our other culture, looked back to England for guidance and model—to Covent Garden and Drury Lane. It must also have sought there a pitiable encouragement, for Boston, naturally, was relentlessly opposed, New York and Philadelphia but semi-receptive; only in the Cavalier South did it meet with a sympathetic response. As the years sped on, a few indigenous American types appeared, but the matrix and spirit were as foreign as mercenaries. Then *Davy Crockett, The People's Lawyer, Mose the Honest Fireman,* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* came along to break a small but eventful hole in the ice; though still no playwright had appeared who could even approach the lofty plane achieved by our essayists, poets, and fictioneers. Then on up by a discursive route via *East Lynne* and *Bertha the Sewing Machine Girl,* William Gillette and the early Cohan, to those critical days of the 1910's.

Nineteen hundred and ten is an arbitrary date. The national state was then suffering one of those eras, marked by colonial expansion, booming industry and accelerated trade, which are inherently responsible for and congenial to a flourishing of the arts. And it represents the approximate period in which the revolutionary influence of those two giants of the contemporary theatre, Henrik Ibsen and Gordon Craig, began to rouse the dormant American playwright. It was about this time that a few students realized the tremendous significance of the Norwegian's socio-psycho-intellectual drama, and the Englishman's new "aesthetic" theatre with its fundamental sensuousness and emphasis of mood, feeling, and appearance. Ibsen with his steel-blade perception and discernment of what makes people and society go around; the stage designer Craig with his original convictions of the clamant need for unified, harmonious, and *artistic* productions; and, to a lesser though still vital extent, the Russian, German, Irish, and so-called Modern English Schools were the precursors, teachers, and inspiration for what was shortly to evolve as genuine, challenging American drama.

The miracle did not take effect over night. Martin Flavin, Charles Sheldon, Eugene Walter, and certainly George Cohan were turning out some considerably ameliorated manuscripts; but gentlemen like the Reverend Dr. Charles Rann Kennedy, and sometimes Augustus Thomas, slipped to the deplorably low level of their precedent colleagues. Once fairly launched on

its novitiate, however, the revitalized stage, as we now realize in retrospect, rushed forward toward maturity, or at least toward aesthetic production and vastly improved craftsmanship, with air express speed. It had an almighty lot to learn and it learned it capably in a hurry. This new dramaturgy demanded recognition of three fundamentals: it had to be regarded as an art with all the requisites, prerequisites and respect due any artistic medium; it wanted craftsmanship—strong, solid construction and production; it claimed realization of its rightful place in the library of American culture, and of its own inherent destiny. In a generation's time, these factors have become so integral a part of our drama that it is difficult to believe they were not here when the first English stock company trod native boards in 1752.

Leading protagonists of the new theatre were those two rebellious young upstarts, the Provincetown and the Washington Square Players. What the contemporary stage owes these two groups, and their host of minor off-shoots, the "little theatres," only time and particularly appreciative critics will be able to tell. They were the twin flames which lured the scattered moths of America's dramatic genius. Between them they attracted such people as Eugene O'Neill, Robert Edmond Jones, Lee Simonson, Susan Glaspell, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Philip Moeller, Maxwell Bodenheim, Alfred Kreymborg, Roland Young, and Katherine Cornell; and as individual and theatre developed concomitantly, dissecting, evaluating, and utilizing each fresh discovery together, there resulted a drama of such compass and implication as to attract the attention of the entire theatrical world. Themselves experiments in a period of extensive experimentation, they provided the laboratory in which all the rapidly evolving new concepts were tested; and by their own fortitude, breathed a spirit of enterprise and innovation into the consciousness of playwrights who would otherwise never have had the courage or the opportunity to give expression to the heretical ideas which thronged their minds.

A goodly share of the credit for the theatre's growing eminence also belonged to a dozen or so colleges and universities which, by the addition of experimental drama classes to their copious curricula, not only encouraged an interest in, but also contributed much likely young material to the new movement. George Pierce Baker with his fruitful work at Harvard and later at Yale was, of course, the foremost example. When you glance at the current stage's cast of actors, authors and directors who passed through Baker's "workshop," you realize what a surprising influence he has wielded. Emphasis with these campus groups was invariably directed toward the writer on the prevailing assumption that the play, not the acting or the set, is the thing.

Cultural eras usually produce a man who stands forever after as a sort of symbol or figurehead of the period. In Eugene O'Neill America found an admirable and very nearly perfect symbol. Whether or not he writes box office plays is of little concern. Whether or not you like them is of no concern at all. What matters is—the great and enduring significance of O'Neill is—that he, virtually single-handed, deflected the course of American drama, instilling it with a startling new verve and spirit, charging it with a sweep and scope which lifted it in one movement to its rightful high place alongside the other native arts. Blasting to smithereens the artificial little compositions which had been cluttering our sickly stages, this greatest of living playwrights revealed a new and glorious horizon as a backdrop against which the eternal issues of the cosmos and men's souls could be examined and propounded through the medium of the written drama. Here was inspiration which the stage could not resist. Floundering young playwrights took heart, stage designers discovered a worthy champion, and audiences at weary last found a dramatist who commanded their complete and profound attention. Sometimes that attention was not merited, occasionally O'Neill turned out some admittedly terrible stuff; but it is by the influence he exerted, by the revolutionary forces he set in motion that Eugene O'Neill must essentially be judged.

The war marks a convenient division between the interval of our apprenticeship and the fifteen-year period of dexterous Broadway theatricals which ended when Maxwell Anderson wrote *Winterset*. The American theatre during the hectic years of the Jazz Age was remarkable for two factors, both of them important stages in the evolution of native drama. First, was the polishing and perfecting of a peculiar adroitness and cleverness exemplified by the plays of the prolific George S. Kaufman; and the cultivation of a social sense and sophistication with which an S. N. Behrman likes to gloss his shows. The second was the formation of the Theatre Guild which, evolving from its lowly beginnings in 1919 out of the remnants of the Washington Square Players, rose to the unchallenged leadership of the national theatre. Motivated by the single ideal that the stage should present and reflect the very best drama of the time, not as a commercial venture, but solely as an artistic and experimental project, the Guild has carried on through the Twenties and up to the present day with much the same work and spirit that the Provincetown and Washington Square groups fostered. The early Guild, somewhat in the manner of its friend, Eugene O'Neill, was a milestone marking the most advanced level to which the American stage had yet ascended; and it was, at the same time, a model and mentor for those mushrooming little theatres which, constructed on a repertory basis, thrived and blossomed in an atmosphere of blithe experimentation.

The Guild has served a further purpose. By introducing to one another the stage designer (Simonson), the director (Moeller), the author (O'Neill) and a variety of actors, the organization brought into incalculably valuable contact the various previously isolated departments of the theatre. The author began to appreciate some of the actor's difficulties, the director saw what the stage designer was trying to do, they all forcibly learned the function of the man in the box office. Through this contact, a whole was evolving that was greater than the sum of its parts. Each group was growing larger in experience, broader in understanding and outlook. A realization was born—like that which permeated the Moscow Art Theatre—that under our contemporary system true success may be achieved only when the superiority of the whole production to the unit, the group to the star, is honestly realized.

This was the second stage in the development of the new American dramaturgy. It was the heyday, marked by veritable creative orgies, of O'Neill, Sidney Howard, Paul Green, Laurence Stallings, George Kelley, Susan Glaspell, Elmer Rice; and the beginnings of Maxwell Anderson, S. N. Behrman, and Robert E.

Sherwood. Variety was a keynote. Plays ranged a diversified field from Ansky's *Dybbuk* to *Broadway, Dracula* to *The Trial of Mary Dugan, Strange Interlude* to *The Front Page*. Experimentation was in the air. And, most important of all, the influence of Robert Edmond Jones, Norman Bel Geddes, and Jo Mielziner, stage designers and pioneers, was exerting a lasting effect on the stage, giving it strength, beauty, sweep, depth, and power, fashioning it into an adequate medium, even for the masters, Dante and Shakespeare. These men, when judgment sounds, will occupy a niche right alongside the enigmatic O'Neill in the Valhalla of all good showmen.

The American public accepted the theatre in the 1920's. Prior to that time it had existed either very much unknown or unheeded, or down in the cellar with china painting and mahjong. That period of the Turbulent Twenties was to the present decade what Ibsen and Shaw were to the whole contemporary theatre: a foundation, a proving ground, and a medium by which various important innovations were made known to a grossly ignorant public. This probative state of affairs continued on up to the end of the decade when the unsanatory spirit of the day finally caught up with the soaring stage and attempted to drag it down to its own lowly levels. While the seduction was not particularly successful, it did manage to break up the theatre's creative spree and to stymie the stage generally until the swift upward sweep of the last few years.

Today, American drama has attained a third stage in its flowering process, with another stage yet to go. We are now sufficiently grounded in the mechanics and technique of the craft. The Twenties gave us action, plays with punch, drama tuned to the tempo of the times and the prevailing spirit of the American people. They taught us how to put plays together effectively and cleverly with an artful use of emphasis and a degree of respect for the orthodox unities. Now that we know how to say it, we are ready to say something.

Conditions throughout the country are properly conducive. Radio, the movies, and a plethora of cheap reading matter have lured all but the sincerely interested right out of the theatre, giving the stage a more select, discerning, and appreciative audience than ever before. The current revival of the road does not necessarily refute this statement. It merely means that there are sizable groups throughout what are no longer slightingly referred to as "the provinces," which, by half a dozen means, have been educated to a very real and impressive regard for the legitimate stage. This present interest in Broadway's vagabond vehicles is as auspicious an augury as has been vouchsafed us in some time.

It is a further happy fact that the money-minded producer can no longer pan off on an unprotesting public just anything he has a mind to. New York audiences revolted not many years ago, and their cousins on the road have followed suit. Education has brought not merely a renovated interest; it has made the road more acutely and discerningly aware of what it wants. Broadway has replied by turning loose only its top-flight and season-tested productions.

One of the significant characteristics of this third stage of our metamorphosing theatre is an ever-increasing tendency toward literary drama, a union which at once makes for good literature and better drama. It means, simply, that today's plays may be critically analyzed and treated as a type of literature while still conforming to and exemplifying all the mandates of good drama. The two forms are not at all incompatible, but can and should unite to consummate a congenial match. O'Neill, as is his custom, inaugurated the trend in this country; and currently Maxwell Anderson seems to be its most apparent, though by no means its only exponent.

It is probably safe to say that the three shining stars in the contemporary theatre's authorial ranks, and some of the ones most representative of this new trend, are Maxwell Anderson, S. N. Behrman, and Robert E. Sherwood, with Mr. O'Neill, of course, taken for granted, and George S. Kaufman lurking at the edge of the wings. There is at present a popular, and not unjustified, vogue of proclaiming Anderson the fair-haired boy and the white hope of lyric drama, a crusader carrying on while O'Neill remains for a period in suspension. These currently resounding salvos have been prompted largely by the writing of *Winterset,* though critics must have been forewarned in some degree by the former editorial writer's earlier works.

Anderson's present success lies almost wholly in his recognition of one fundamental and universal fact: that the medium of poetry and blank verse is the drama's most effective, loftiest, possibly its only true voice. Anderson observed that the majority of the world's enduringly great plays have been fabricated in the lyric medium. As a matter of fact, his whole proposition is succinctly set forth in the much quoted preface to *Winterset:*

> I have a strong and chronic hope that the theatre of this country will outgrow the phase of journalistic social comment and reach occasionally into the upper air of poetic tragedy. I believe with Goethe that dramatic poetry is man's greatest achievement on earth thus far, and I believe with the early Bernard Shaw that the theatre is essentially a cathedral of the spirit devoted to the exaltation of men . . .

The fruit of such a conviction is *Winterset,* our finest example of poetic drama to date. Here, as in varying degrees in *High Tor* and *Elizabeth the Queen,* is an exalted beauty, an inexorableness, a truly heroic depth and dimension which critics have, almost to a man, recognized as stemming from the Elizabethan super-dramas of Shakespeare.

Raised on a realistic, repertorial prose diet, we may find some difficulty at first in digesting this finer fare of poetic drama. But Anderson is a vigorous person. He has tempered his work with a romantic dash and a flare for red-blooded melodrama that dispel any tendency toward anemia. Sometimes, however, he tempers or tampers a little too much, entangling his symbolism and realism, impressionism and naturalism; needlessly elongating his verses and retarding his tempo; and occasionally suffering grievious lapses from form. So, when the final score is totaled, it becomes apparent that even Mr. Anderson has enough touching up to do to keep him pardonably busy for a healthy period ahead.

One of the characteristics of present-day dramatists is an inclination to vary single plays with a variety of techniques ranging from symbolism to naturalism, romance to realism. Sherwood's *Petrified Forest,* like *High Tor,* has just about everything in it but a fan dance. Not so many years ago the production of such a hodge-podge would have been laughed off the stage. Today, we find that sort of mêlée curiously effective.

The theatre has tenaciously clung to a "don't mix your drinks" attitude. Any merging of melodrama and philosophic speculation, blood-and-thunder action and

lyric drama, has been regarded as about as advisable as mixing nitrogen with glycerin. Plays like Sherwood's and Anderson's have done much to break down this prejudice. In its fashion, *The Petrified Forest* is one of the most important American plays ever written. It is convincing evidence that good, hard, red-blooded melodrama can be spaced with real profundity and intelligent discussion to emerge as drama with rapid-fire tempo though still meriting consideration as serious theatre.

A particular brand of melodrama was one of our most noteworthy contributions to the stage. Pulling it out of the doghouse where it has embarrassedly hid these past forty years, Sherwood and a few others have, by treating it not too seriously and with a grain of humor, made it a reckonable factor in modern playwrighting. *Idiot's Delight,* a canny indictment of war, was rendered all the more effective by its quantity of humor and its rejection of that blighting intolerance and humorlessness which invariably does the pacifists' cause more harm than good.

In *The Petrified Forest* and the character of Alan Squier, disillusioned young intellectual, Sherwood displays his finest writing. Here is philosophy that probes deep to the roots of present-day ills, revealing civilization in a somehow detached but damning way. Though it does not reach the high plane of Anderson's lyricism and is not potentially as great, the *Forest* is less obscure, surer in what it says, and quite as successful at the box office.

S. N. Behrman is our prize example of the playwright who produces mature intelligent comedy with an understanding of the devious ways of the sophisticated comic medium. Behrman is an honest writer. Eschewing the theatrical tricks of a Kaufman, he writes only what he knows is real and plausible. His forte is the problems encountered in modern sophisticated living. He has an acute appreciation of the social storms and conflicts which distress the higher strata, and when he couples this sensitiveness with a natural grace and wit, the result is some of the most mature comedy yet produced in this country. At times, however, Behrman becomes a little too enmeshed in the queries he himself predicates, though usually he is pulled up in time by his unfailing comic flare.

With a slight mixing of metaphors, I have said that American drama has one more plane to reach before it attains full bloom. This last step in the process has to do with an increasing definition of aims and goals, a strengthening of technique and method, and a feeling for that cosmic scope and upward sweep without which no drama is truly great. Anderson most fully lives up to these requisites, yet even he frequently is not sure of himself, is confused as to his direction, and succumbs to a pessimism and negative attitude which enfeeble his work. Once we have appreciated the necessity of conforming to these canons and have put that knowledge into practice, we will have realized the destiny of the American theatre, and will find ourselves in the midst of a dramatic era unparalleled since the days of good Queen Bess' golden drama.

But Who Are the Isolationists?

MIRIAM ZIONY

Under the provocative caption "War in the Peace Movement," Mr. James Wechsler in two recent articles in *The Nation* laughed to scorn the attitudes and principles of the National Peace Conference and its pacifist leaders, and condemned the recent Conference on World Economic Coöperation to failure even before it was held. At the same time *The Nation* launched a Peace Poll in which American liberals were asked to decide whether "isolation" or "collective security" shall be the method by which to "Insure America Against War," to determine "Which Policy Affords Us the Better Chance of Security."

As stated in the introduction to the Peace-Policy Questionnaire and Ballot printed in its March 19th issue:

> *The Nation* regards this as the greatest question before the people of the United States today. A safe foreign policy depends upon our ability to answer it wisely—and promptly. Above all, the liberals of the country should express themselves clearly. It is to them that our Administration looks for support and direction . . .

If there is to be clarity of expression on this very vital question, however, should there not first be a clearer and more objective consideration of the facts and a clearer definition of the term "isolation" and "collective security" than there seems to be either in the minds of the originators of the questionnaire or of many of the liberals and radicals who answered it and who have been using those terms so very readily of late?

It may remain the function of the historian of the future, if not that of *The Nation's* Peace Poll, to show that a goodly number of the so-called "isolationists" and the naive and ineffective idealists of the peace movement have the more realistic and more rational approach to collective security and to the solution of the world's problem of war and peace; and that the collective security advocates who would resolve national and international ills and animosities by resort to boycotts and sanctions, by making accessible more weapons of death through repeal of the Neutrality Laws, by the formation of military and economic alliances for action against aggressors, are the real isolationists—for are not *they* the ones who propose that the totalitarian states be isolated from the democracies socially, politically and economically, with only the hatreds and prejudices given free rein to develop on a universal, international scale between aggressors and aggrieved!

"Collective security" and "quarantine the aggressor" have become catchwords that are fraught with many dangers. In olden times, before the development of modern biological and medical science, persons who were physically or mentally ill were thought to be bewitched or under the influence of evil spirits. Incantation and prayer, banishment and isolation, corporal punishment of the afflicted were various popular ways by which it was thought the evil ones had to be driven out and warded off before the sick could be cured. Not infrequently the patient himself was destroyed in the process of thus destroying the forces of evil.

Today, although we do at times quarantine the sick as a preventive measure against the spread of con-

tagion, we know that the quarantine does not relieve the patient's pain or fever, nor is it of itself considered a preventive of disease. We know that positive, curative, rather than punitive treatment must be used and that in extreme cases the doctor sometimes even has to quarantine himself along with those he is trying to make well. We know also today that fresh air and vitamins are better safeguards of good health than serums and vaccines.

Moreover, quarantining a nation or a group of nations is a different matter entirely from that of segregating a sick and helpless individual in a hospital or in his own home. The individual, besides being physically incapacitated, generally knows that he is sick and accepts the medicines and other treatment prescribed for him. The quarantined nation, or rather its dictatorial heads, cannot be put to bed or under lock and key; are far from helpless; and far from ready to submit to supervision and "cures," especially when the remedies prescribed are punitive ones administered with hymns of hate and indignation, and more liable to aggravate than to alleviate the underlying problems and inequalities which experts on national and international affairs agree are the basic causes of aggression and world insecurity.

It is interesting to see that a large majority of those expressing an opinion in *The Nation's* poll are for collective action against aggressors, yet at the same time admitting and recognizing the necessity for "government action toward reducing the economic causes of international friction," through trade agreements, stabilization of currencies, etc. In other words, although aware of the real causes of the international afflictions, they still advocate the outmoded remedies of the witch doctor and the castigator of devils.

Eugene Staley, Associate Professor of International Economic Relations at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, rapporteur and one of the experts at the Conference on World Economic Coöperation, drew a comparison between problems and conditions faced by our thirteen original states prior to the adoption of the Constitution and present-day world situations.

"The world today," said Professor Staley, "is actually smaller, measured by time distance, than the thirteen colonies"; and today's international problems in their content as well as in their urgency are comparable to those which faced us after the Revolutionary War. Not only, as he showed by citing John Fiske's historical study, *The Critical Period of American History* 1783-1789, were there bitter tariff wars and navigation acts, boycotts, and disputes over states rights, but problems of currencies and credits, public and private debts, bloody conflicts over territorial claims and seizures, political and religious intolerance and persecution.

"With quarrels about trade and quarrels about boundaries," declared Professor Fiske in his remarkable analysis which sounds like a modern chronicle but which was published more than forty-five years ago, "we seemed to be treading the old-fashioned paths of anarchy, even as they had been trodden in other ages and other parts of the world."

"Every state had its own war debt, and several were applicants for foreign loans not easy to obtain." In one state "all Protestants enjoyed equal privileges, but Catholics were debarred from voting." In another state "Catholic priests were liable to imprisonment for life," because of their religious views.

For several years after the Revolution countless cruelties and indignities were heaped upon the Tories, who had remained loyal to the British crown.

> In some states they were subjected to mob violence. Instances of tarring and feathering were not uncommon. . . Notices were posted ordering prominent loyalists to leave the country. . . Of those who tarried beyond a certain time, many were shot or hanged to trees. . . . 100,000 persons, or nearly 3 per cent of the total white population, quit the country.

Their belongings were confiscated and in England there was serious consideration of armed retaliation.

Troubles over protective tariffs were legion. Professor Fiske points out that between New York and Connecticut they led to a

> great meeting of business men, held at New London, [where] it was unanimously agreed to suspend all commercial intercourse with New York. Every merchant signed an agreement, under penalty of $250 for the first offense, not to send any goods whatever into the hated state for a period of twelve months. By such retaliatory measures it was hoped that New York might be compelled to rescind her odious enactment (a tariff on firewood from Connecticut). But such meetings and such resolves bore an ominous likeness to the meetings and resolves which in the years before 1775 had heralded a state of war; and but for the good work done by the Federal convention another five years would scarcely have elapsed before shots would have been fired and seeds of perennial hatred sown on the shores that look toward Manhattan Island.

Monetary difficulties resulting in the use of paper money, scrip, and trade by barter played no small part in the general confusion among the thirteen states in that critical period.

According to a very liberal British philosopher of that day, whom Fiske quotes:

> The mutual antipathies and clashing interests of the Americans, their difference of governments, habitudes, and manners indicate that they will have no center of union and no common interest. They never can be united into one compact empire under any species of government whatever; a disunited people till the end of time, suspicious and distrustful of each other, they will be divided and subdivided into little commonwealths or principalities, according to natural boundaries. . .

But "reason" prevailed over "passion" and methods of conciliation over force. Our Federal union, our Constitution, and our Bill of Rights were born not only of the memory of the denial of human rights and liberties by the Old World but also out of the bitter experience with religious, political, and economic intolerances and cruelties in the New World.

Today the world is troubled with the same old problems in newer forms. History has a way of repeating itself, we are told. But whether it repeats in good ways rather than in bad ones depends, to a large extent, on how well we have learned its lessons.

It is the firm conviction of those who believe neither in "isolation" nor in "collective action against aggressors" that now, even as in the past, only through the application of reason and good will and faith, through sincere international conciliation and coöperation can the dangers and difficulties that confront us, the problems and differences that divide us, be most intelligently and most amicably overcome.

"We need not hope that our work will be majestic if there is no majesty in ourselves."

—*John Ruskin*

"I Saw No Criminals"

BENJAMIN FRIEDMAN

Several years ago I asked Enrico Glicenstein, the artist, to meet with the Jewish men and women in my prison congregation at Auburn, New York. Before his arrival I had a private session with my "boys." I felt that I ought to prepare them for the novel experience of meeting an artist. After all, convicts hardly anticipate pleasures in prison that they rarely enjoyed as free men. Occasionally they listen to addresses by prison reformers or ministers but an artist comes to them once in a lifetime.

It was, perhaps, the first time that men in prison were to meet a real artist, a painter, a sculptor, and a master of dry-point. How would my "boys" take to this man? He was so mild of manner and so soft of voice! Would they exert themselves to catch his words which he pronounced with difficulty? Perhaps his language might prove too literary for them? The majority of them had not even been graduated from grammar school. I was anxious that the "boys" in prison should be favorably impressed with Enrico Glicenstein.

Some of the "hardest-boiled criminals" were in that congregation, "lifers" as well as men serving twenty, forty, and sixty years for crimes of all descriptions. What could an artist mean to them? With trepidation I introduced him to the "boys." They applauded him as he rose to speak. They were giving him "the once-over." A grin spread over their faces which, at a beseeching glance from me, they quickly controlled. They knew that I wanted their coöperation to make the party a success.

As Glicenstein commenced his address, the "boys" moved forward to hear him more clearly. This is what he said:

"My boys, I was once in prison myself. It happened in Italy. I bought a second-class ticket for a trip from Rome to Florence. There were no seats available in the second class so I went in the first-class compartment. When the conductor came to collect the tickets, he said 'You have no right to be in the first class. This ticket is for the second class. You must pay the difference in fares.' I was willing to pay this difference but resented the manner in which the conductor spoke to me. When I got to Florence the conductor had me arrested. I was put into prison.

"The guard ordered me to wash the floor of my cell. It was a red stone floor. With a pail of water and a scrubbing brush I proceeded to do as I was ordered. I observed that the water in the pail was turning red from the color of the stones on the floor. The dirt picked up by the brush made the water thick. An idea came to me. Here I had red paint and white walls. I worked all night. By morning I had completed my interpretation of 'the Crucifixion.'

"The guard came to my cell in the morning and saw my painting on the wall. 'Who made this?' he asked. I said 'I don't know.' 'Didn't you make it?' he asked. I said 'No, with what could I have made it?' 'A miracle!' the guard exclaimed, and ran to tell the other guards of his discovery.

"You know how fast news spreads in prison. All the guards and prisoners were talking of the miraculous painting that had appeared during the night on the walls of my cell. I became very popular.

"The prisoners asked me to tell them what crime I had committed. I said 'I don't know.' They said, 'Are you a thief?' 'No!' I replied. 'Did you murder somebody?' 'No!' 'Then why are you here?' I could not satisfy them that I had really done nothing.

"Later when the warden came down to see the painting on the wall, he said, 'Who are you?' I said 'Glicenstein' but that didn't mean a thing to him.

"After eight days I was released. My family had read in the newspapers in Rome that a strange-acting person had been arrested in Florence. The reporter had described me as an international adventurer.

"I was just as free in my prison cell as in my own studio. I worked and created, and as long as I was able to create, I felt myself free." With these words he finished his address.

Some of the men forgot to answer the mess call. Others sat in silence in deep thought. Perhaps these "criminals" were also "artists," who in the commission of their crimes were acting out of the background of their dreams.

When my artist friend left the prison he said, "I saw no criminals. I saw only boys and girls, men and women."

Glicenstein's visit produced a new crop of artists. I know of no one who was able to evoke so much love for creative work as did Enrico Glicenstein during his visit at Auburn Prison. The artist gave them something of his own spirit. He made them feel free in prison. In the shops and yards they were "prisoners." In their cells they were free men.

The artist's visit taught me how important it is for the chaplain to minister to the creative spirit in prisoners. Creative activity helps the prisoner to maintain his morale. It affords men behind prison bars an opportunity for self-expression.

But not all prisoners are potentially creative artists. Most of them ask the chaplain to serve them in a more material way. They are concerned with getting and not giving. If the chaplain grants their requests they are pleased, at times most grateful. If the prisoner recognizes that the chaplain's interest is genuine, he will be amenable to suggestions for self-improvement. Let me cite an example:

J. K. was a surly fellow. He got in trouble with the guards and as a result he was segregated from the general prison population. This treatment made him more bitter. The principal keeper asked me to have a talk with him. I did. I have met many prisoners in my life but this fellow looked bad to me. I did not like the look in his eye. I acted as if I was not afraid of him but I was. I got him to talk. This is what he told me: He had left a sick wife back home. She needed help but did not

know how to help herself. If he could only arrange for her care. Could he see her again? I wrote to a social service organization in New York City. She was given a railroad ticket to Auburn. It cost me about ten dollars to have her stay at the local hotel. Part of this money went to pay a doctor who was called by the hotel manager to take care of her. She was a very sick woman. She dragged herself to the prison to see her husband. Six weeks after her visit to Auburn she died.

There was a complete transformation in J. K. This is the letter which I received from him after his return from his wife's funeral which he attended in New York City:

> My beloved wife has passed away. Yesterday I was brought back after having attended her funeral. I write to you on this sad occasion to ask you a slight favor. Will you be good enough to send me an English copy of the prayer for the dead, and also if possible the transliteration from Hebrew of the same prayer? I shall spend the next ten days sitting in mourning in my cell. The tragedy of it all overwhelms me. Such an angel to go to an untimely grave at the age of thirty-two. She was too good for this world. It is really true that the bad live and the good die young. You may recall having met her, early last January upon her visit to me. That was the last time we talked to each other. When I arrived at the hospital just before she died she was already unconscious and had been that way for several days. She didn't know I was by her side. I held her in my arms for two hours just before she passed away. She killed herself trying to help me and she died of a broken heart. My present predicament sent her to a premature grave. No truer and more noble-hearted wife and mother ever lived. She was incapable of carrying any hatred in her heart for anyone. She loved her enemies not because of the maxim, "Love Thine Enemies," of which she probably never heard, but because it was natural for her to do so. She was truly a child of heaven. She could forgive any wrong. All her life she has known nothing but grief and sorrow. I feel responsible for all her suffering. My poor son is now a real orphan. My heart is torn with concern and worry for his future. He is at present living with my dear wife's parents. They are aged and old-fashioned and I fear he will be a victim of neglect and lack of proper guidance. He is twelve and very clever, but sensitive. I fear his present environment may have a demoralizing effect upon him. Until now, he at least had the loving and devoted care of a tender-hearted mother, but now he won't even have that. Forgive me, Rabbi, for annoying you with my troubles, but I could not help expressing my sentiments. I never was much for praying but on this occasion I feel the need for it. Please send me what I asked for. With many kind thanks, I am. . . .

People do not know the multitudinous nor the various types of requests that are made of a prison chaplain. They are legion. Some of the services he is asked to perform are reasonable and unreasonable, possible and impossible of fulfillment. There are, of coure, the usual chronic applicants for the chaplain's services. You will find men ensconced in a corner of the hall waiting for others to depart, so that they can monopolize the chaplain's time. It is not that these chronic applicants have so many vital problems for which they are seeking a solution. They just like to sit and talk. They conjure up the most fantastic requests. A good or bad five-cent cigar, with the suggestion that they smoke it after their evening meal, is my sign that the interview is over.

Most men, however, come with matters that are of vital concern to them. Most men seek honest advice. What may not seem important to the person outside is of tremendous concern to men inside a prison. They want the chaplain to write a letter to some member of the family in order to effect a reconciliation. They may ask him to urge someone to bestir himself or herself to get a job that is indispensable in order to be released on parole. He may be asked to contact social agencies and ask them to make an investigation of conditions in the home from which the prisoner hails. Occasionally the chaplain may meet an offender who is seeking to turn over a new leaf in the tragic storybook of his life.

Not many people realize that the punishment which the State inflicts upon the prisoner is often borne more easily by him than by the members of his family. Too often the members of a prisoner's family are left without any support whatsoever. They become charges upon the State or beneficiaries of charitable institutions. Too frequently the members of a prisoner's family are the real sufferers. The chaplain, therefore, finds that he can render a real service to a prisoner when he seeks outside aid and guidance for the prisoner's family. It, therefore, becomes necessary for a prison chaplain to have contact with a representative of a social agency that can give this type of service to the members of a prisoner's family. Once the chaplain promises to do something for a prisoner, he must try in every way to carry out his promise. It is bad business in prison to make a promise and not fulfill it. The chaplain will not only become disliked; his influence will be undermined by the disappointed and disgruntled victims.

The chaplain should be on the best possible terms with the warden and the principal keeper. He should know the rules and regulations of the prison. When he intercedes in behalf of a prisoner, he must be careful not to interfere with prison discipline. If he has the confidence of the principal keeper he need have no hesitancy in asking for special consideration in behalf of a prisoner, who, for some reason, may have become the victim of discrimination.

I believe that chaplains could render a great service to the prisoners if some provision were made by the State for them to meet two or three times a year with the members of the prisoner's families in New York City. The majority of our prisoners hail from New York City. It would enable the chaplains to discuss more intimately some of the specific problems related to prisoners and their families.

The chaplain should be able to call upon some unofficial organization-interest in prisoners to take up and follow through such matters as may require the attention of lawyers, judges, and district attorneys.

Chaplains and social workers should know the story of St. Francis of Assisi and the leper. St. Francis of Assisi met a leper whom he tried to help. The leper who was in great pain, blasphemed God in heaven and man on earth. The Saint, through prayer, resolved to drive out the evil spirit which possessed the agonized leper. The latter, however, resented the Saint's intercession. The more fervently St. Francis prayed, the more vehemently the leper cursed. The disciples devoted to St. Francis resented the apparent ingratitude of the leper. St. Francis seemed to understand the leper's attitude

much better than did his disciples. This is how the Saint dealt with the situation:

> Then St. Francis forthwith caused water to be heated with many sweet-smelling herbs; thereafter he undressed him, and began to wash him with his own hands, while another friar poured on the water, and by divine miracle, where St. Francis touched him with his holy hands the leprosy departed and the flesh was perfectly sound. And even as the flesh began to heal, so the soul began to heal also; wherefore the leper, seeing that he was beginning to be made whole, began to feel great remorse and repentance for his sins, and to weep very bitterly; so that while his body was cleansed outwardly of the leprosy by washing of water, so the soul was cleansed inwardly of sin by amendment and by tears. And when he was completely cured, both in body and in soul, he humbly confessed his fault and said, weeping aloud: Woe is me, for I am worthy of hell for the injuries and revilings which I have done and spoken against the friar, and for my impatience with God, and for the blasphemies which I have uttered.

The Study Table

A Great Letter Writer

THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF BAYARD TAYLOR. *Edited by John Richie Schultz. San Marino, California: The Huntington Library.* $3.00.

The literary world owes a debt of gratitude to Professor Schultz and to the Huntington Library for giving these unpublished letters of Bayard Taylor to the public. Popular author, lecturer, newspaper man, diplomat, translator, and poet, Bayard Taylor has been well-nigh forgotten by his fellow Americans. This oblivion is not deserved. Taylor's translation of *Faust* should give him a permanent place in literature. But the greater part of his prose dealt with travel books, and books of travel are ephemeral. Tastes, countries, conditions change, and travel books become quickly out of date. Taylor's novels dealt not with ideas of eternity but with contemporary reform. Such books too soon cease to interest a changing public. But his translation of *Faust* will remain forever.

Taylor was a great letter writer. Many of his letters found their way into print in the *Life and Letters* published in 1884 by Mrs. Taylor and H. E. Schudder. But a large number have lain unread in the Huntington Library. It is these letters that Professor Schultz has ably edited. The letters are important in showing the development of Taylor's ideas and talents. They reveal his theories of art and criticism. It is interesting to note that he ranked Lowell above Emerson. In a letter written December 4, 1868 he said:

> I have always believed in Lowell, from the days when my belief was instinct only—have claimed his dues for him for years when there were few to grant them—and my present conviction is that he stands at the head of our literature. If he seems to be overshadowed by Emerson, it is because those who stand behind Emerson look up from a lower plane, and see the latter's head projected above Lowell's.

That was literary criticism in America by a prominent man of letters. In the seventy years intervening, Lowell has constantly lost acclaim and prestige, while Emerson has continuously grown until he is quite generally admitted to be along with Jonathan Edwards the acme of American genius. But Taylor's point of view is easily understood. Lowell like Taylor wrote of the passing scene, the contemporary. Emerson grappled with the Eternal Spirit underneath all contemporary life. Emerson was a philosopher, Lowell a literary chronicler of the temporal.

Taylor's mind was not given to religious or philosophical speculation. Only once in these letters does he give his views on religion. Writing in 1870 he said:

> I, too, think the question of religion transcends all others in importance; but precisely for that reason, and because I have observed the manifestation of religious ideas so carefully, I feel we cannot be too tolerant and considerate in dealing with others.

Tolerance was one of Taylor's characteristics. He hated reformers both because they dealt crushing blows at his novels and because they interfered with his habits. He loathed the idea of trying to make a people moral by law. "True culture," he wrote, "is so much more important, for it includes and insures temperance!"

One of the most delightful aspects of these letters is the relationship to Whittier. The friendship of Whittier and Taylor was very real and extended over a period of thirty years. A word of praise from Whittier made Taylor supremely happy. After Whittier's approval he craved the approval of Lowell.

Taylor's great desire was to be known as a poet. Again and again in his letters come such phrases as "I look on Poetry as a serious passion, and devote to it (her) all of life that I can spare from its duties and necessities." Taylor performed a lasting service for American letters. He made German thought an integral part of American literature and to his undying glory is his translation of *Faust*. An important contribution of these letters is the light they throw on the evolution of the *Faust* translation.

* * *

Introduction to Philosophy

THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY TOLD IN PROBLEM STUDY. *By Walter Scott McNutt.* 198 *pp. Boston: Palmer Company.*

The versatile author of this introduction to the study of philosophy has recently announced his intention to run for the governorship of Arkansas. He is at present Professor of Education and Philosophy at Arkansas College, a Church-related college under the Presbyterian Church, U.S.

The story of philosophy has been repeatedly told, but a new attempt to explain the unanswered questions of the meaning of life is ever welcome. Professor McNutt has attempted to introduce the beginner to philosophy through acquainting him with the sources. This is always commendable and a method much needed in American textbooks. Appended to each chapter is a workable bibliography indicating sources dealing with the problem studied.

The book begins with an attempt to define philosophy and carries through to the attempt to define reality itself. Much attention is given to the relation of philosophy to religion. Fundamentalists, evolutionists, and modernists can all find food for thought in these pages. This is important, since most educators in Arkansas believe academic freedom is confined to the Church-related colleges.

An able introduction to this book has been written by the well-known newspaper man and book-collector, Fred W. Allsopp, Litt.D., of Little Rock. All in all, this book may profitably be used both by the teacher of philosophy and by the general reader.

C. A. HAWLEY.

Religion in Soviet Russia

UNHOLY PILGRIMAGE. *By Thomas L. Harris.* 185 *pp. New York: Round Table Press.* $2.00.

Mr. Harris, a minister in England and in the United States for a number of years, went to Russia to discover how the Russians managed to live for twenty years without God, and, though his impressions are confusing and even contradictory in many passages, one thought stands out, namely: the Soviet Union is building a new order, a new society, a new culture, a new civilization, a new type of man whose character excels that of the men in the other countries Mr. Harris had known.

Mr. Harris visited a Park of Culture and Rest and found that the booth occupied by a lecturer on atheism was deserted while those booths devoted to lectures on aviation, science, etc., were crowded. He found himself in a church on a Sabbath day and out of a congregation of 387 he observed one-third were under thirty-five years of age, a factor which would fill with envy every minister in the United States, and he therefore feels justified in deducing this opinion: "I doubt whether religion is any more dead in the U. S. S. R. than in the U. S., only in Russia they have put the obituary notice in the papers—perhaps prematurely." But throughout the book Mr. Harris is reluctantly forced to admit that it is not the Church and not religion in the accepted sense that have a future in Russia but the new communist ethics, which, he maintains, has cultural affinities with religion and with Christianity before it was divorced from ethics after the Renaissance. "I saw no saints among the communists," says Mr. Harris. "Instead there was an admirable intention to count nothing human as alien, together with a very questionable intention to reckon everything which was not human as altogether non-existent."

How does the new communist morality express itself in the individual and social life of the Russian? As briefly as possible I shall condense Mr. Harris' thoughts and impressions. Children in Soviet Russia have a place in society; in America and England, they have not. "Filial ties are not entangled with economic chains." The youngsters are frank and healthy; happier, jollier, better behaved than their contemporaries in Christian America. In matters of sex, they are wholesome, natural without the boisterous "horseplay which signals sexual tension." "Without benefit of Sunday school, sacraments," observes Mr. Harris, "the hundreds of young people I met in Russia faced the sexual problems of adolescence with a purity and decency that any priest would covet for the young people of his parish." The worker at a Gorky factory is socially-minded, the worker in a Ford shop society-minded. The latter is trained to keep up with the Jones', the former to share with them. Labor is honored in Russia. Work is a man's right and the reward is "not only material but a spiritual sense of coöperation." A rise in wealth implies a "proportional rise in culture" because "the moral evil of competition" is abolished. The writer, the artist, the poet, the musician, the philosopher, the scientist, the technician, and others, freed from their dependency for bread and butter upon a plutocracy, are free to create new values. In sum, the new communist morality gives "strength and substance to every aspect of Soviet culture," without religious sanctions and aspirations; and creates a type of character "superior" to that produced in other countries. "Try as I would," states Mr. Harris, "I could not avoid the conclusion that the type of character being produced in Russia is superior to the type of character being produced in the other countries I know."

In spite of the fact, however, that Soviet Russia proves that "character needs equity more than piety," that "Soviet civilization is not materialistic in the sordid sense," and that the achievements of the new man in communist society are a challenge to the Christian Church, Mr. Harris nevertheless found "something" lacking in Soviet Russia. In plaintive tone he explains this "something": "In Russia I missed that rare quality so easily recognized, so hardly defined, called holiness." And while "goodness can exist without God, as it does in Russia," says Mr. Harris, "holiness requires God." Therefore he concludes: "How much is lost when men forget the true Catholic Humanism that 'God became man that man might become divine'." Thus the significant economic, social and racial gains attained in Soviet Russia—abolition of exploitation, equality in industrial and social opportunities, racial harmony and understanding, etc.—are paled by the loss, absence of the ephemeral entities, *divinity* and *holiness*. Undoubtedly, the preacher gained the upper hand of the scientist and impartial observer in Mr. Harris upon his return to his church in the United States. Although he came close to understanding the "spirit" of new Russia he failed to state its implications to the culture and morality of forthcoming generations. Is it not conceivable that in the future, as it is already established in a large sense in Soviet Russia, more superior spiritual entities than *divinity* and *holiness* may arise to motivate and uplift mankind?

MICHAEL B. SCHELER.

A Religious Parable

OUR LADY. *By Upton Sinclair. Emaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press.* $1.50.

Upton Sinclair likes this latest novel of his. So do I! He thinks it is "a lovely story, and deeply reverent." I agree! It is in form a fantasy—a variant of the familiar idea of Jesus coming back to earth and finding things strangely alien to the precepts of his religion. Sinclair has used this style of story before, with great success—as witness his *They Call Me Carpenter,* and also his *Roman Holiday.* But this tale has a tenderness and beauty which are somewhat new.

The opening chapters are laid in Palestine—in Nazareth, at the hour when Jesus (here called Jeshu) is leaving to go to Jordan, to meet John the Baptist. Mary (here called Marya) is anxious for her son. What will befall him in the great and terrible world beyond the hills over which he has just now disappeared? Filled with foreboding, Mary seeks out a witch-woman, who, at her bidding and in return for a price, weaves a spell of the future.

By this device, cleverly worked out, Mary, the Nazarene peasant-woman, wakes up to find herself in Los Angeles, in the great football stadium on the day of a championship game between Southern California and Notre Dame. In a series of amusing and illuminating adventures, Mary comes into contact with a Father O'Donnell, professor of ancient Semitic languages at Notre Dame, who is amazed to find himself discoursing in Aramaic with a strangely clad woman

who talks of Nazareth, Herod, and her sweet son, Jesus. To his horror, the priest discovers that Mary knows nothing of the Virgin Birth and Christian dogma generally, and looks upon all she sees about her as stark paganism. Persuaded that some witchery is abroad, Father O'Donnell takes the mystified Mary to the bishop of the diocese, who subjects her to a ceremony of exorcism which restores her to her time and place. Awaking in the witch-woman's hut, Mary is much displeased, saying, "I asked to see the future of myself and my son, and nothing I saw has anything to do with us."

This is bitter and sweeping satire. Yet is there such gentleness in Sinclair's treatment of the theme, such compassion in his depiction of Mary, such insight into spiritual verities, that it heals rather than wounds. Especially good are the opening chapters, with their accurate and lovely picture of the home of Jesus and of the person of his mother. This story, slight in compass, is one of Upton Sinclair's most impressive works.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

The Conversion of Yahweh

I, YAHWEH. *By Robert Munson Grey,* 352 *pp. Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company.* $2.50.

The advance publicity on this exciting novel was fact, not propaganda. From the first page to the last it is intensely exciting and often breath-taking. While not perhaps wholly original, the literary device of having Yahweh, the man-made deity of the Jewish-Christian tradition, write his own life's history, gives our author thrilling and dramatic chances. Thus Yahweh, first the Jews' projection of their own ideas of God and later the Christians', tells of his first recollections as Abraham's household deity down through Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and the Jewish worthies, so familiar in the Old Testament. He is the jealous war-god, very perturbed by the prayers of the Nazarene, whom he is never able to understand. Yet he is somewhat affected by the constant pacifism of the early Christians, and for a time lays aside his sword, huge as Excalibur. Then comes the fatal meeting with Constantine, who slyly slips his "consecrated" sword into Yahweh's palm. "And I sensed that the blade of it and mine arm were one instrument—as though my hand were welded to the cross that was its hilt." The preaching and prayers of Tertullian and the Christian loyal to Christ's pacifism henceforth are unavailing. Yahweh again glories with pride in the gore of "righteous" war.

The author's touch is light in the chapter, "One Throne for Three,"—a most amusing presentation of the compromises of Nicaea with its dogma of the Trinity. Read it and have a series of good laughs. Then on through Pope Leo, the Great, with an occasional saint like Francis of Assisi almost winning Yahweh to follow the conscience Jesus had given him, down through Luther, mistaking him for the Devil and hurling his ink bottle at him, and Henry VIII, with Yahweh, of course, on the side of the Pope against Henry's divorce, until we come to America. Disguised as Jon Waye, Gentleman, Yahweh embarks with the pilgrims in 1620, bound for Virginia. As men once thought he had made animals in an attempt to find a helpmate for man, so now Yahweh decides to experiment. He wonders what will happen if men have the chance at freedom that the Puritans seem to desire. Therefore, Yahweh deflects the *Mayflower* so that it lands "in a little bay whose waters were enclosed by the hook of Cape Cod. For I said, 'Let us prove what freedom can do where it is not in conflict with the olden customs.'" Alas, "this freedom did manifest itself in a strong purpose of the individual man to get gain for himself." We are in the midst of the mad world of 1914-18.

While the world wallows in war and almost commits suicide, traditional evangelists like "Billy" Sunday and "Sister" Aimee make "Jazz on the Altar Stairs." All Britain and America could think of doing at the close of the world debacle was to glorify "The Unknown Soldier" as typical of "the most illustrious of the land," while the American Legion likewise sticks by the same old suicidal traditions. Hitler will speak to Yahweh only through the Reichsbishop, because he is a Jew; and Hitler issues his orders as to how Yahweh must behave, if Hitler is to allow him even to play second fiddle to the Führer. Of similar outcome is Yahweh's meeting with Mussolini at the call of ten thousand priests of Italy. At the Coronation of George VI, this man-made god is much impressed. He loves the church's blessing of the state's sword so much that he realizes, "These Englishmen, they are also my Jews," even as he knew that "the Reichsführer is a Jew."

Yahweh gets a terrible headache over his centuries of vacillation between the sword and love, so that he decides to retire to a nice cave in Palestine, the place of his beginning. He accompanies a group of returning Zionists. At Calvary's hill he muses upon the beauty of the Crucified, but regrets the Gospel of Love, so out of harmony with the "will to strife which is eternal in the nature of man. Today thou wouldst find no throngs to hearken to thee, nay, thou couldst not persuade even twelve." Now comes the gorgeous climax of the book. Yahweh hears himself called by name. Knowing not whence it comes, and thinking it but the reflection of his own memories of the Nazarene, he is stricken to the ground, and cries, "Who art thou?" Finally, he hears clearly the Voice, "I am he whom thou pretendest to be." A glorious finale to a most fascinating and dramatic novel! Long may its message be proclaimed, until enough people grasp it to revolutionize the institutions of religion in harmony with the plan of the Hebrew prophets and of the Man of Nazareth!

GEORGE MAYCHIN STOCKDALE.

Homesickness

I must go back to my home again;
  To my home where the meadows be,
To be again where the birds sing
  Near the ever restless sea;
Where the salt winds and the fogs rise
  O'er the tall grass bending
While the blackbird and the mavis sing,
  Their sweet songs blending.

I must go back to my home again—
  To a land that is far away,
To see again all the landmarks
  That I dream of night and day;
Where the rose blooms, and the doves coo,
  Where the home-folk reaping,
Sing the old songs like the shepherd's sang
  While dumb flocks keeping.

JOHN ROWLAND.

Correspondence

An Open Letter to Judge Yankwich

Judge Leon R. Yankwich,
U. S. District Court,
Los Angeles, California.

My dear Judge Yankwich:

Just now I have read with interest your letter as published in the June 20th issue of UNITY, as I read with particular care your statements of greater length set forth earlier in *The Open Forum* of Los Angeles. I have long admired you as a man, and held you in especial regard as one who seemed to me to transcend the ordinary judicial attitude in recognizing with unusual clarity the supremacy of common sense and social movement over the literalisms of the courts and legal technicians.

I confess that with all my desire to continue this high regard for you, and with no present disparagement in my mind of your sincerity and exceptional personality in general, your reasoning has left me wholly unsatisfied with your self-defense, or shall I say your defense of the legal procedure to which you have given the endorsement of your character and position.

In this connection let me say that I am far from agreeing with Marcus Graham in his political philosophy; that is, I am no anarchist. But I have followed his work also for many years, with some slight personal acquaintance, and more intimate acquaintance with his high principles and rare sacrificial service on behalf of the fundamental rights of man, a consideration which I am compelled to say seems to me vastly greater than the consideration for human rights so habitually overridden by the courts. From the viewpoint of that increase in respect for the great humanities which must inevitably overthrow all the beggarly worship of literalisms both in the field of religion and in the field of legalism which has brought the world to its present horrible plight, Marcus Graham is in my opinion, head and shoulders above the courts, as he is, in general, also in advance of the churches.

You are, I feel, arguing with yourself in your attempt to justify the procedures to which your legal position has brought you—far beyond your consciousness of this fact. Loyalty has for the moment become a virtue defeating a greater loyalty, and your reasoning an intellectual mirage in which you have lost sight of the everlasting hills. Both you and the law are the greater sufferers by this lesser loyalty which has lost for you the immediate vision of a loyalty which transcends words, and without which vision all words become a delusion and a snare. The loss to you counts less with me, much as I have esteemed you, and I think would count less with you yourself, if admitted, than the loss to the law, which is already in sad estate with the people and runs deeper and deeper into the bog of public contempt or, at least, public regret and alarm.

You are on the wrong road, friend, even in serving the law; there is tragedy, fearful tragedy ahead if the courts cannot understand the mighty undercurrents of our day, which drive toward the substance of human rights against all the sophistries of that letter-worship which wrecks every institution that exalts the letter above the spirit of justice and human right.

ROBERT WHITAKER.

Los Gatos, California.

War Resisters

Editor of UNITY:

The opportunist anti-militarists are having a hard time just now with their practical politics. Enmeshed in such problems as collective security, neutrality, Japanese scrap iron and the Spanish embargo, they are obliged to adopt a new set of principles with every move on the international chessboard.

War Resisters, on the other hand, have a program straight and unchanging as the Golden Rule, one which has stood the test of all the incredible events since 1914. Members of the War Resisters League are men and women who have signed the statement:

> War is a crime against humanity. I therefore am determined not to support any kind of war, international or civil, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war.

No matter what governments may do, one thing is certain, wars will cease when men refuse to fight. Will not those among your readers who are ready to make this refusal lend their strength to the movement by signing the above declaration?

In any case they will find stimulating food for thought in the leaflets distributed by the War Resisters League, 171 W. 12th Street, New York City.

JESSIE WALLACE HUGHAN, *Secretary.*

New York City.

The Field

(*Continued from page* 146)

commemoration of his forthright courage within the gray walls of Leavenworth twenty years ago. For Evan Thomas (Norman Thomas' brother, and now an M. D.), for the rights of conscience, had hung by the wrists in "solitary." And though neither he nor either of the two other conscientious objectors—Fred Leighton and Irving Hartman—who spoke so movingly from the floor, seemed to feel they had done anything remarkable, we insisted on paying grateful tribute. More searing than merely physical injury, Dr. Thomas stressed the psychic cruelty of the doctors who damned the conscientious objectors as "egotists."

An able and good-humored plea for economic sanctions was made by Dr. Sidney F. Goldstein, with which most of us absolutists disagreed. The final session, presided over by Frank Olmstead, was led by E. Raymond Wilson, of the American Friends' Service Committee, Rabbi Isidor Hoffman, and Tracy D. Mygatt. It swung out into the "pure serene" of "The Inner Motivation of War Resistance," and we went home feeling we had ransacked the ancient treasure-chests, and found again that abiding truth of the priceless value of the conscientious minority. To quote some words of Frank Olmstead's:

> We have driven our roots deep, so that no period of drought can disturb us. They may persecute us. They may imprison us. They may take our lives. They cannot take from us the joy of being right, of pushing our conclusion back to ultimates, of knowing that in time the entire world will be following in our footsteps.

TRACY D. MYGATT.

A Mother Renounces Profits of War

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom publishes the following letter which one of its members, an Irish mother, has recently sent to the Director of an important Armaments Trust.

Sir:

> Until lately, and misled in part by your own report, I hoped you were only making explosives for industrial purposes, chemical manures and other commodities of a mainly useful nature. But I have come to see that you are making armaments. I have, therefore, decided on the sale of my small holding. I fully realize that you can afford to smile at this weak effort to oppose the making of armaments. I also realize that I am putting another person, the buyer of my shares, into a position which I myself refuse to continue to hold. Yet I feel I can no longer continue to handle this bloodstained source of income. My last dividend, and the profit, if any, on the sale, will go to a Peace Society. Because, though I am a poor financier, I know that when other mothers—and fathers—come to see that they pay for income derived from such sources with the blood of their children, they, too, will count the price too high.

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